

LONG AN PROVINCE SURVEY - 1966

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in effect, jealousy as a major VN trait

1. Peasants' preoccupation with "fairness, equity, social justice" in distribution of benefits means: a) they are susceptible to Communist approach, which stresses equal shares, even if it means slicing a smaller pie; (b) a US/GVN program which results in strongly unequal benefit, as it is implemented, can be worse than nothing (especially if it confines Communist paywar, in benefitting those already locally rich & influential) (or demonstrating corruption). Likewise, GVN programs/promises engender resentment when they are not fulfilled.
2. Note high place to health aid among aspirations.

(drawing lots preferable?)

3. Desire for credit, and resentment against (perception) "sound credit policies" of NACO, totally counter-productive in this struggle. Ag. credit always motional, not made for land title (interviewer bias?)

JUSPAO Planning Office
Saigon, Vietnam

September 1966

4. "Villagers" (now) = old people and children and women

Bea study on census-grievance data

1000 - 1000

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SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

LONG AN SURVEY

PHASE I

PURPOSE:

Phase I of the Long An survey was conducted in 19 hamlets during the period July 11-22, 1966. The purpose of Phase I, was to meet the local people, make friends and determine: living conditions, the impact of refugees, effectiveness of GVN programs, facilities available, security situation and the aspirations of the people. The following are some highlights of the areas of investigation and some observations on each.

GENERAL:

The levels of economic progress in all areas seem to run from fair to poor, depending on how far you live from the province or district city. Few young men were encountered in the survey; old men and women were the majority of the people interviewed. There is common agreement that more security is needed and with it, the other programs will fall in line.

SPECIFIC:

A. Living Conditions

Most people in the 19 hamlets are farmers and common laborers. By their standards, they all make an acceptable living. They all have enough to eat and a place to sleep. Hunger is not a problem. Any attempts to portray the people or the VC as starving and suffering from unfilled basic needs, such as food and shelter, will not be effective.

B. Impact of Refugees

In a word, the refugees appear to be "ignored" by the GVN. They make up a small percentage of the population, but in some hamlets, they are in the majority. The lack of an effective refugee program could have far reaching results efforts by the GVN in other areas. The majority of the people in the hamlets have seen other hamlets destroyed and their residents become refugees. The thought is always with them that some day it could happen to them. The poor treatment they see refugees getting results in a poor opinion of the GVN.

C. Effectiveness of GVN Programs

The majority of the people in the hamlets are visibly bitter towards the GVN assistance programs. Even the GVN programs that are implemented are not fairly administered and inequities are common. Here again, the local hamlet resident can only judge his national government by the impact it has on him now and what hopes it can give him for the future.

D. Security situation

The hamlets are categorized as either, A, pacified and secure, B, pacified but subjected to periodic attacks, or C, pacified but under VC pressure. These classifications are easy labels to assign, but they do not necessarily indicate the people's attitude toward their own security. The security situation in these 19 hamlets is representative of the nation-wide problem. Where adequate security exists, there are few if any problems. Where security does not exist, every undertaking seems to fail. Unless the GVN is going to provide security, the only solution is for the people themselves to provide it. If they can be motivated to become involved in their own security, instead of being apathetic about it, their morale would be firmer. The spirit of the West, hang together or we will hang separately, is not present in the hamlets.

E. Aspirations of the people

The aspirations of the people of the hamlets do not seem to be unreasonable at all. They basically want the government to do for them what they cannot do for themselves. They want schools where now there are none, they want aid stations where now there are none, they want insecticide and sprayers where now there are none, they want agricultural loan programs to be set up and fairly applied, they expect to be able to buy food for their family from the wages they make. Last but not least, they have to be taught to defend their own hamlet from small unit VC action and to rely on timely support from Province reserve forces if their own forces cannot meet and destroy the enemy.

*(Can't teach them without
"teaching" the reserve forces.*

LONG AN SURVEY - 1966

INTRODUCTION

This document comprises a series of reports on 19 hamlets visited during Phase I of the Long An Survey conducted during the period July 11-22, 1966.

With the assistance of the Provincial authorities the survey was implemented to determine the results of various rural development programs, to assess the general security situation, determine media information and find out the population's attitudes and aspirations.

In addition, it was designed to give a comparison with the USIS Long An Survey conducted in 1964.

This survey was conducted in two Phases. Phase I was to survey living conditions, media information, make friends with the people in the hamlets and gain the respect of the local government officials. Phase II was extensive interviews on rural development programs, security, attitude and opinions on the government policies as well as the war effort. The reports of Phase I and II, in places, may overlap as the same hamlets were visited for each.

The nineteen hamlets visited were in the districts of Thu Thua, Binh Phuoc and Ben Luc. These hamlets are divided into three categories, i.e. A, B, and C.

Category A consists of hamlets that have been pacified and are considered to be secure. Twelve Category A hamlets were visited as listed below:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Binh Nghi | 5. Binh Bat | 9. Binh Cu |
| 2. Tho Cang II | 6. Binh Anh 7 | 10. Xom Cong |
| 3. Ap Moi | 7. Binh Quan | 11. Xuan Hoa |
| 4. Binh Cang I | 8. Phu Nhon | 12. Cau Ngang |

Category B consists of hamlets that have been pacified, however, are still subject to intermittent VC sabotage. The two hamlets visited, in this category, were being consolidated by the Revolutionary Development Cadre at the time of this survey. They were:

- | | |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1. Vam Thu | 2. Ap Binh Nhut 4 |
|------------|-------------------|

Category C hamlets are listed as pacified but are subject to VC attacks, propaganda and sabotage. The hamlets are not safe to outsiders without armed escort. The five hamlets visited in this category are:

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Vinh An | 3. Tam Hiep | 5. Phu Khuong |
| 2. Thu Tuu | 4. Cau Tre | |

Prior to the start of the field work Colonel Van Anh, the province Chief, personally talked to the interviewers. He presented his ideas on how they should conduct themselves in the rural areas. His rural construction staff was appointed to assist the team in conducting the survey. A representative of that office accompanied the team to all hamlets visited. During the survey the province administration to include the province Chief and his rural construction Chief were re-assigned. This had no affect on the survey operation as the new personnel gave all assistance required.

To assist in establishing a degree of rapport between the rural people and the team, copy books, pens, pencils, calendars and publications (Huong Que and Free World) were passed out to the populace. The school supplies were especially well received as the primary school classes had just begun the new term.

The team followed the same routine in each hamlet. The U.S. officer and interpreter interviewed the hamlet chief and any other officials present, while the interviewers went from house to house in the hamlet. A total of 366 persons were interviewed in the hamlets.

When necessary, the local security forces provided security for the team. This consisted of a check through the hamlet and the surrounding area to make sure there were no unfriendly personnel around.

As shown in the following reports, the team was very much impressed with the honest, straight forward manner of the people. Tabulations of media information are published separately.

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Binh Nghi Hamlet (Category A)

Nhi Binh Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Status:

About two years ago, the population of Binh Nghi hamlet was 600 persons living in 80 houses. Due to the presence of anti-Communist refugees, and employees of rice-mills, the population is today 1,000. There are 50 anti-communist refugee families, of whom only one tenth have received allowances. According to the hamlet chief, refugees who reported to village administration before 1966, have receive no allowances because the documents were lost. Most of the refugees come from Tan Tru District.

Public Health:

There are no medical facilities in the hamlet. In cases of emergency, the residents have to walk to the first-aid station and the maternity clinic at Binh Cang I hamlet. About 5 months ago, a Rural Public Health team visited the hamlet, but it hasn't returned again.

Education:

The hamlet is building an elementary school with three class-rooms. Expenditures are met part by Government funds, and part by the residents within the framework of a "Self-Help Project" initiated by USAID. Most of the children are attending the nearby Binh Cang school. There are about ten high-school students.

Religion:

The majority are Buddhist or ancestral worshippers. The rest are Cao Dai.

Standard of living:

In general, residents enjoy a fair standard of living. The present high cost of living does not affect them very much because they live on their own farm products. However, anti-communist refugees are having trouble making a living.

People are optimistic about the future, the present rice crop seems to be a good one.

II. Economic Status:

Rice cultivation is the main occupation of the people. About 60% are tenant-farmers, they rent from 1 to 2 hectares of land. Some landowners have from 5 to 6 hectares.

The secondary resource is small trade, pig and poultry raising. In addition, there are three weaving factories which provide jobs for hundreds of weavers (30% are hamlet residents and 70% coming from other hamlets). They receive about VN\$3,000 as monthly wages. There is a rice-mill in the hamlet. Refugees are retailers of local grown commodities, laborers or workers at the factories. Most of them are poor because they have left their homes and have received no government allowances. The program of distribution of pigs, for breeding, and selling fertilizers at low prices was also carried out in the hamlet. However, since only a small quantity of fertilizer was sold and some pigs given, those who could not benefit from the program have been resentful against it.

In general, people feel confident and hope that the present crop will produce good results. They have experienced bad crop for the last two years.

III. Security:

The Revolutionary Development Cadres built the hamlet and set up the barbed wire fence in 1964. The hamlet is protected by 1 platoon of Popular Forces who are stationed at the end of the hamlet. Defenders coordinate with the Popular Forces of Binh Cang I hamlet (the two hamlets are parallel).

In cases of emergency, the Popular Forces are assisted by elements of the District or by 25th Division troops.

At night, the hamlet is sometimes harassed by the VC. Lately, they forced the workers of the weaving factories to participate in a meeting, at which the latter was made to voice their complaints. They took along 7 persons, shot 1, and released 3, the rest was detained being suspected as security people.

Few families have dependents active with the VC.

IV. Aspirations

Like other hamlets, the Binh Nghi hamlet wants to receive loans from the Agricultural credit office and more pigs, for breeding. Pigs must be distributed equally to the residents.

More elementary schools be build.

First-aid station and maternity hospital be built.

Radio-sets be sold at low prices.

Allowances be granted to Anti-Communist refugees.

Desire that peace be restored.

Tho Cang II Hamlet (Category A)

Huong Tho Phu Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Situation

The population totals 664 persons living in 124 houses. There are 8 anti-communist refugee families numbering 34 persons. There were 75 persons from 18 to 45 years old: 60 were drafted in the Army.

Education

There is no school in the hamlet. Pupils have to attend the nearby Tho Cang I Elementary School (8 class-rooms) which is only 300m away. There are 20 high-school students and 1 University student.

Health:

There is no first aid station in the hamlet. Sometimes, medical teams come to give aid to the people. Hamlet residents, for the most part, have to buy drugs at Long An Province Capital. Expectant mothers have to go to the maternity clinic of the province.

Religion:

70% are Buddhist; 25% Cao Dai, 5% other

Communication:

Lambretta motor-scooter cabs run between hamlets, buses connect one district with another. Main routes of communication are secure.

II. Economic Status:

Main resources come from farming. They cultivate their own rice-fields, or rent from landowners. Pigs, chickens and ducks are also raised. There are 11,000 ducks in the hamlet. Almost every family has a plot of land to plant fruit-trees. Immigrants, coming mostly from Tan Tru district, are having difficulty making their living.

They are for the most part laborers. A few years ago, the people had bad crops caused by bugs, that destroyed the rice. Though they were provided with insecticide powder, the bugs could not be exterminated. In the present year, people have to put in a requisition in order to buy fertilizers or insecticides, which are sold in small quantities.

Government's Programs

In the present year, the Agricultural credit office will grant loans which amount to VN\$69,500. There will be granted over 3 steps: step I for 26 families, step II for 14 families and step III for 3 families. For animal raising, each family can borrow from VN\$2,000 to VN\$5,000. As for credit loans, each family can borrow from \$10,000VN to 40,000\$VN.

In the program of distribution of pigs, for breeding, since there is only a limited quantity of pigs, there is an unfair distribution, However, each family has some pigs of their own.

The government sold fertilizers to the farmers (fertilizers were paid by instalments) and granted loans for rice cultivation.

Gifts donated by the people of U.S. have not reached the inhabitants.

Though the present cost of living is rising, people seem not to be disturbed by it since they have a self sustained economy.

III. Security

The defenders are made up of a squad of popular forces. Owing to its location, near Road # 4, the hamlet enjoys some security, chiefly in day-time. However, beyond the borders of the hamlet, towards Tan Tru district, it is insecure.

Last year, the VC damaged the barbed wire protective fence, but later it was repaired. This year there has been no encounter with the enemy. There are only 3 families that have relatives co-operating with the VC. On the other hand, 50 families have some connections with the national government.

In general, security in the hamlet is good.

IV. Aspirations

a) To activate programs of "Revolutionary Development" so as to increase farming and animal husbandry.

b) To build schools and first-aid stations.

c) To have security forces to improve the defense against the VC and to build a better hamlet.

d) That friendly artillery forces be more cautious about their shellings. About 6 months ago, artillery shells killed 1 water buffalo and injured 2 people in the hamlet. There has been no compensation for this.

Ap Moi Hamlet (Category A)

Khanh Hau Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Situation

Population: Ap Moi hamlet has about 300 inhabitants living in 64 houses whose living standards range as follows.

from 1% to 2% : above average

30% : average

60%-70% : below average

Interviewers met mostly women, old people and children. Youth are very few, only 3 youths aged 20 and about 20 girls. None are anti-communist refugees.

98% of the population live by farming. They either have lands of their own or they rent from others. Intellectuals are very few, there are some who have moved to live in Tan An. Those who can't read or write (Vietnamese) are rare and are made up of old people. There is no distinguished personality, reputable people are old, experienced persons and the hamlet chief settle the difficulties arising among villagers. The most respectable person is a ex-sub-district chief to whom the VC so far have showed no feelings of interest. However, he doesn't sleep in his house at nights (he sleeps in other places).

Standard of living:

The standard of living is worse than in the past years, due to a bad crop last year, As a rule, the output of each "mau" (hectare) is from 100 to 150 gia (about 2,000-3,000 kilos of rice). The bad crop of last year produced only 70-80 "gia" per hectare. Officials (from the province) have provided D.D.T. powder and sprayers, but not sufficient to solve the problem. There are only 4 sprayers for the hamlet.

Education

There is no school in the hamlet, so the pupils have to go to the school of the nearby hamlet; therefore the number of classes and teachers cannot meet the educational needs of both hamlets. Furthermore, the pupils have to go a long way to school and some of them are not admitted, hence there are a number of illiterate children. However, most of them can read and write the Vietnamese language.

Health:

There are no medical facilities in the hamlet, the village is provided with a maternity clinic and a first-aid station, with nurse. From time to time, some drugs are given to the people - but not enough. Sick people must go to the village or to the province, according to the degree of their illness.

Religion:

80% Buddhist and Ancestral Worship

15% Cao-Dai

5% Roman Catholic

10% none

II. Economy:

Most of the population live by farming. They farm their own rice-fields. Some of the lands were bought and paid for by instalment through the program of land reform, initiated by the government. Each family owns 1 hectare, some have more. Pigs and chicken are also raised. 20 pigs, for breeding, were distributed to the people by drawing lots.

Government's Programs

Animal Husbandry: The government has provided pigs and chickens for breeding and cement for building pig-spy. Cadres have supervised this program. Every family raises chickens and ducks to be sold at markets.

Land Reform: The government buys land from rich landowners and sells it to the poor. Lands are paid for by instalments. The land, is of two types:

a) rice-fields. In case of good crops, each hectare can yield as many as 60 or 70 gia. (about 1,200 or 1,400 kilos of rice).

b) Tilled lands for the planting of fruits and vegetables. Sometimes the profit is two or three times higher than in the rice-cultivation. There are two crops one main and one secondary.

Hamlet Building

The lanes of the hamlets will be stone paved and two pumps will be furnished to pump water from two wells. 2 sprayers will be used for spraying DDT solution. The villagers wishing to borrow money (from the Government) have put in requisitions and they have to wait a long time (5 or 6 months) before getting the money. Besides, they got less than the amount required.

III. Security:

7 The security in this new hamlet is good. People can live in the hamlet in daytime and at night, however, the hamlet officials sleep in other places. The hamlet is protected by a group of "Self-Defense" combatants composed of 24 villagers. For five or six months, the VC have not attacked. There have been a few harassments. The hamlet is surrounded by barbed wire but there are 16 families living outside this protective fence, however, they live in "normal" conditions. There are 4 families whose relatives are in the VC's ranks. Residents of the hamlet often pay visits to these families and ask them to bring back their relatives. Each family is provided with trenches and fox-holes for emergencies. Routes of communication between hamlets are secure.

IV. Aspirations

Asked about their aspirations, the hamlets residents felt optimistic about the future. They hope that security will soon be restored, so they can make their livelihood.

As for sanitation and education, they would like first a better first-aid station, with adequate drugs and medical facilities, in order to attend to the health of the people; secondly an elementary school, their children will not have a long and arduous walk to the hamlet school.

Because of good weather conditions, they hoped that the coming crop would be better. They wanted the government to provide more DDT and sprayers, for the protection of rice plants and fruit-trees. Besides, more arms and soldiers are needed for defending the people against the VC.

General Remarks:

This hamlet is relatively prosperous and secure, and the residents are strongly anti-Communist. They believe in the Government's support programs. Since the defenders perform their duties, the people enjoy living in a secure hamlet and they are joyful and outspoken when receiving gifts.

Binh Cang I Hamlet (Category A)

Nhi Binh Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Aspect.

The population of the hamlet of Binh Cang 1 consists of 476 inhabitants living in 86 houses, including 37 families of anti-communist refugees. There are only three or four well-off people, the remaining resident's living standards are about the same.

Educational and medical Aspects

There is an elementary school having seven class-rooms and fifteen teachers. Since the children attend only one class session a day, the school can accomodate some five hundred students, some of whom come from the neighboring hamlets of Binh Nghi and Binh Bat 1 and II. There are about 20 high school and 10 elementary school students. Opposite the school area is the maternity hospital and dispensary sponsored by USAID. Every two weeks or at times every month, U.S. medical teams come for medical care. At the maternity clinic, there is a midwife and a female helper. In the hamlet, there is a nurse who has a private practice of administrating shots. Critical medical cases that cannot be treated here are evacuated to the Thu Thua district headquarters'hospital.

Religion:

Almost all the inhabitants are Buddhist. There is one pagoda in the hamlet. The remaining population consists mainly of Cao Dai with a few Catholics.

II. Economic Aspect

Their main resource is from farming. There are two 5 to 10 hectares landowners, and one over 3 hectares landowner.

80% of the population own 3 hectares or less or are farm tenants. After each harvest, the tenant farmer has to pay the landowner 37.5 da (one da is equivalent to 20 kilograms) of rice per hectare and to advance VN\$5,000 for the next rental.

Additional resources are derived from small businesses, passenger transport with "Lambretta" motor-tricycles, and working in factories and mills. This field of activity is important to the hamlet population's everyday life.

The raising of hogs and poultry is also done by some. However this has declined since piggies are now very expensive. (A 2 month-old pig now costs about VN\$1,500 compared to VN\$800 in the past). If the government could provide people with breeding hogs, at lower prices, domestic animal raising will improve. Most of the anti-communist refugees work as weavers at the carpet weaving mills or as construction workers. Their living standards are low and are in bad need of assistance. So far, they haven't received any help in money or other aid items from the government.

Government Sponsored Programs

In general, government sponsored programs do not satisfy the people's requirements; for instance, in the distributing of fertilizer the population, has been wondering why some residents have been able to get it, others haven't.

Hogs:

The provincial government has provided the hamlet with 10 hogs, saying that they would be allotted to the poor. However, it is hard to tell who is rich, who is poor, and this has become the source of many complaints. In addition to the hogs, each family has been issued a mattock and a shovel.

Agricultural credit loans:

Only well-off people will get loans the needy at times are not allowed to do so. They fear that they cannot pay back the loan.

III. Security Aspects:

The hamlet of Binh Cang I is protected by a Regional Force platoon, stationed in a military outpost located at the back of the hamlet.

The hamlet was first built as a strategic hamlet in 1961. Security is relatively well-maintained, however, the VC have come there from time to time during darkness to carry on sabotage acts.

In addition to its own protection force, the hamlet can request additional support from the village, district or provincial authorities.

From 6 p.m. no one likes to circulate in the hamlet because he may be shot by patrols. There are only two or three families, whose members are VC followers. The Binh Cang I hamlet chief has kept an eye on these families as well as on other suspects.

Liaison with other neighboring hamlets by means of roads can be done under relatively safe conditions during daytime.

IV. Aspirations

The people are fairly well satisfied with their present conditions. However, they wish to receive more assistance from the government for the next school year since stationary items have become expensive.

Most of the population live by farming and rely solely on the land to their living. They wish to receive active help from the government in the form of sprayers and DDT powder for crop protection.

In direct assistance programs, such as the distributing of hogs and agricultural credit loans, the government should apply simpler procedures, be more generous and fair when examining grant requests. More schools and teachers should be provided to the hamlet.

Urgent help is needed for the anti-communist refugees. Particular attention should be paid to the 1965 donations that these people haven't received. The population also wishes for peace.

V. General Comments

The hamlet of Binh Cang I has enjoyed a fairly high living standard with neatly kept and well ventilated houses, a school, a dispensary and a maternity hospital. People feel happy with their present conditions. They are not satisfied with government sponsored programs to help improve their hamlet; it might be that they don't thoroughly understand the implementation policy of these programs.

The people can increase farm production for daily consumption by means of raising poultry and growing vegetables. At times, they can set aside money because they produce their food. They aren't affected much by the high cost of living.

Binh Bat Hamlet (Category A)

Nhi Binh Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Aspect

The chief of the hamlet of Binh Bat is also head of the hamlet of Binh Nghi. These two hamlets are located opposite each other with provincial route # 4 running between them.

The present hamlet chief has been appointed for only a few days; therefore he did not know what the population was. However, he knew that there are over a hundred houses; among these, twenty belong to families of anti-communist refugees. Most of the latter have come from the district of Tan Tru. They work as farm hands for landowners and farm tenants or as weavers for the fabric weaving mill located at Binh Nghi.

Educational and Medical Aspects

General education level is low, the better educated have sought jobs elsewhere. There are no medical facilities in the hamlet. They are quite dissatisfied with the government because there is no effort to care for their health. Very seldom, do health workers visit the hamlet.

A 3 classroom school is now under construction. At present the children go to class in the neighboring hamlets. There are about 10 high school students. Besides, there is a "mixed" class conducted by a private middle-aged teacher. Almost all children are sent to school somewhere.

Religion:

The majority of the population are Buddhists, Ancestral worshippers, or Cao Dai. However, there is no pagoda and people feel ashamed at not having a shrine as other hamlets. There are a few Catholics.

Living Standard:

Generally speaking, the living standard here is lower than that of the other hamlets. People have rice and greens in adequate quantity, but need additional foods such as meat, fish, and shrimp, which they must get from the town market.

II. Economic Aspect

The main resource comes from farming. Most of the people are land tenants, only a few are farm owners, as shown below:

60% of the population are tenant farmers (public land lessees) tending 1 or 2 hectares of land

5% cultivate 2 to 5 hectares of land (some of these are landowners)

2% cultivate 5 to 10 hectares of land (these are landowners).

Additional resources are gained by growing greens (beans, maize, cucumber, melon etc) and raising farm animals (poultry, hogs, etc). This provides additional food and extra-money to buy additional market provisions. A few are small trade merchants. Some are employed as workers. They work early in the morning to 2 P.M. and receive VN\$35. a day plus a meal. This year's crop seems to be promising which will improve the standard of living.

Last year, the government gave the people insecticides but it was not enough.

As to public farm land, the government has taken back some of it to allot to the anti-communist refugees, at the expense of the lessees.

Government projects aiming at improving people's life have not been carried out thoroughly; only a minority can enjoy governmental help.

Fertilizers are sold at low prices, i.e. VN\$160. a hundred kilograms; however, it is very difficult to obtain.

Weavers need to become owners of their looms. The government has planned to sell looms to the population on an installment basis, but so far, no actual implementation has been initiated.

To promote animal husbandry, the agricultural credit loan office has granted sums from VN\$5,000 to VN\$20,000 per family, however they do not help the majority of the people. So far, there have been seven families that have received loans; six of them have been given each VN\$20,000, and the seventh, VN\$15,000. Almost all the borrowers are from well-off families. They are able to pay back the government. The poor do not borrow because they may be unable to pay the loan back, therefore, they receive no assistance from the agricultural credit loan office. Some well-off people, after receiving the loans, have used them to buy fertilizer and to re-sell that at higher prices to the poor. So, the rich become richer, and the poor, poorer.

III. Security:

The hamlet is protected by a Popular Force platoon, which is also in charge of the defense of six other neighboring hamlets. In addition patrols from district headquarters often circulate the area on security missions.

The hamlet is secure during daytime. However at night the residents have to take protective measures against VC infiltration. Most of them spend their nights by their shelters.

Eight months ago, the VC cut the barbed wire fence. There was an exchange of fire, however, since that time there has been no fighting. The barbed wire hasn't been repaired. The majority of the hamlet residents have relatives in the ARVN.

IV. Aspirations

The anti-communist refugees have left all their properties to come and settle in secure areas, controlled by the national side, therefore, they are in need of all kinds of assistance. They wish to receive donations from the government, as has been promised.

There is a category of "temporary refugees" who need to be helped also. Three quarters of the refugees haven't received any assistance.

The population wishes to see a broader application of various programs dealing with hog raising, farm credit loans, etc.

The local authorities should discipline those Popular Force soldiers who rob the residents' and have no consideration for the poor.

They wish to have the local government assist in the repair of the hamlet roads as these roads are in very bad condition. They are narrow, and very muddy.

V. Comments

In general, the population of the hamlet of Binh Bat are enjoying a fairly easy but low living standard. They are pleased with the hamlet administration, although the hamlet chief has only been appointed since the 1st of July, 1966.

Only the anti-Communist refugees are dissatisfied. They feel as if they have been forsaken and don't know what their future will be.

As to the permanent residents, they are fairly optimistic.

They strongly believe in the national cause and hate the Communists. Only 1 to 2% stay aloof since they have some of their relatives in the VC ranks.

Binh Anh # 7 Hamlet (Category A)

Nhi Binh Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Status.

Population: Binh Anh hamlet consists of two sections, A and B, and lies near provincial road # 4. Population totals 618 persons, living in over 100 houses. There are 20 Anti-Communist refugee families with 130 persons. Most of the refugees came from neighboring areas (Binh Chanh, Binh Nhat, My Binh). Only 2 people have received government allowances.

The hamlet residents are made up essentially of women, old people, and children. Most of the male youths are soldiers or members of some type forces. Some have left in order to find work.

Education: There is a 3 class-room elementary school in the hamlet, which teaches from the 4th grade downward.

Higher students (from grade 3 to grade 1) attend the Nhi Binh elementary school, about 2 kilometers away, which has 3 elementary teachers. Most children finish the elementary education, some have dropped out of school, having failed in the entrance examination to the 7th grade. There are 10 high school students, 2 students have high school 2nd cycle certificates. One is a Public Health Cadre, and the other is a University Student.

Public Health: Health care is a difficult problem for the hamlet residents. Since there are no medical facilities in the hamlet, people in need of medicines are in a bad situation, especially at night, due to the lack of security and means of transportation. People are unhappy because hamlet officials do not take care of their health. Medical teams seldom come to the hamlet to render aid to the residents.

Expectant mothers have to walk to the Long An Province hospital or to Cau Voi village.

Religion: Ancestral Worship: 50%
Buddhist 30%
Cao Dai & Roman Catholic 20%

II. Economic Status:

Most of the people are farmers, some are farm laborers whose daily wages average VN\$70. In the past years, bad crops yielded only 60 or 70 "gia" per hectare (about 1,200 kilos or 1,400 kilos of rice). In those years, some people were not able to pay for fertilizers and insecticide.

There are only 10 landowners. Most of the residents are tenant farmers who rent land from landowners or the Hamlet Administration.

In general, the residents earn enough money to make their living. Apart from rice cultivation, there are only low-income occupations (retailers, workers etc...).

Animal husbandry is very poor, since the people don't have ways and means to develop it.

In the government's programs aimed at helping the people, hamlet residents have received very little and to date have received no fertilizers or insecticides. They are told that residents of other hamlets have benefited from these programs.

The people have trouble getting loans made by the Agricultural Credit office. Some have been advised by the Hamlet Chief to put in a request but to date they have not been received. Relatives of the Hamlet officials are reported to have received some loans. People do not want to borrow money, because being very poor, they can't afford to pay it back.

In June 66, a visiting US-VN delegation distributed gifts (clothing, medicines, candies...) to the people.

In general, the hamlet residents are making a poor living, due to lack of security and the present high cost of living. In addition, the Hamlet Administration is doing a bad job attending to their welfare. Some corrupt officials carried out unfair distribution of foods among the people. For instance, sick people couldn't buy condensed milk at official prices, while the healthy ones could buy milk. Worse still, the latter sold part of the milk at higher prices in order to get extra-money. It's the same in the distribution of pigs for breeding. When the government gave 15 pigs to the people, the poor didn't receive any, only well-off people having some connection with hamlet officials got these pigs.

The hamlet residents are resentful toward the corrupt officials, and getting no assistance from the provincial authorities -- are despondent and hurt spiritually and physically.

IV. Security:

More than a year ago, a team of Revolutionary Development Cadre set up a protection belt for the hamlet. As a whole, the security is fair. Defenders are made up of a squad of "Local Force Personnel" equipped with small arms. A post manned by Popular Forces is located near the hamlet. For two years, the VC have not harassed the hamlet, though they still operate in areas next to it.

Sometimes, Popular Forces walking across the hamlet take chickens, ducks etc. without paying for them but the residents do not dare voice their complaints. They however like soldiers of 25th Division very much, because the latter are well behaved and cause no trouble for the people.

People from 18 to 40 share in the defense of the hamlet, they have high morale and are anti-communists and most are soldiers' dependents.

V. Aspirations

The people want the Government's programs to be implemented and they want local district and province level authorities, to pay attention to the distribution of scarce items in order to prevent unfair distribution.

They want a first-aid station with adequate personnel and equipment to be build to take care of the health of the people, also a maternity clinic is required.

To build more class-rooms to accomodate elementary students.

Loans be made to enable them to raise pigs, poultry etc.

To provide cement and other materials for building pig-spy.

More sprayers and insecticide are be needed to protect the crops.

V. General Remarks:

Binh Anh 7 hamlet lies along provincial road # 4, on one side of the road, there are 40 houses, and on the other, there are 45. However, due to the lack of security, interviewers could visit only one section, on the right hand side (Saigon-Long An direction).

The hamlet residents economic status as a whole is average. Present high cost of living doesn't affect their living much. Owing to fair security, they are living with assurance and hope of making a better living in the future. They complain about poor hamlet administration, government's program not being implemented and about the lack of educational and medical a facility.

X Visit
Binh Quan Hamlet (Category A)

Binh Lap Village

Binh Phuoc District

Long An Province

I. Social Status

The population of Binh Quan hamlet is 671 inhabitants living in 117 houses. Among them, there are 8 families of anti-Communist refugees. These refugees come from Tan Dong, Kien Tuong Province.

There is no great difference in living conditions between the people. They enjoy equal and average living standards and their intellectual standard is fairly good.

Education and Health Problem

In the hamlet, there is a 5 room primary school which can barely satisfy the needs of the population.

Health facilities here are fairly good. There is a health station and a nurse who looks after the health of the population. Moreover, the hamlet is situated near the province capital of Long An and the people can easily get medicines there. A few months ago, a ROK Medical team visited the hamlet, distributing medicine and clothes.

Religion

There are 32 Catholic families, 13 Buddhist, 20 Cao Dai, and the rest are Ancestral worshippers.

II. Economic Status

Farming is the main occupation of the people. The majority of them are land tenants. There are only 7 families who own rice fields as they inherited their ancestors' property. In addition to rice-growing, Binh Quan residents do some gardening (greens, beans, and melons). Rice fields here produce two crops each year. In the past few years crops were very poor. They got only 50 gia per hectare, instead of 100 or 150 gia if the crops had been good. GVN has made an effort to help the people exterminate insects but it did not work effectively. There was a lack of insecticide.

Besides rice growing, the population also raises poultry and pigs. About three, or four raise ducks (about 800 each).

The GVN provided 54 pure-bred suckling pigs, for breeding, and the people were to be visited regularly by specialists to advise them on raising the pigs. The government also supplied cement and VN\$1500 for each of those who had received pigs to build pigpens. In addition, the GVN also gave 16 pigs to the poor families without requesting them to be paid back. Agricultural credit loan office also loaned funds to landowners in accordance with the amount of land each of them possessed.

III. Security

This hamlet was named "VC annihilating Hero in 1962." From the outset (1962), the people of Binh Quan hamlet had voluntarily formed their defense forces in their hamlet and made their own hamlet a strategic one, purchasing barbed wire at their own expense and fencing their hamlet. Not until later did the provincial government provide weapons for their use. The defense force, organized by Mr. Muoi Dinh, has been respected by the VC. Mr. Muoi Dinh now is old and retired. He had once served in the French Army and then in the Viet Minh Forces for nine years as a company leader. Mr. Muoi Dinh's retirement from active service was good news for the VC, however, they still are trying to find an opportunity to kill him. In July 1966, the VC got to the hamlet Chief's house and tried to assassinate him.

The defense force of the hamlet is a well-trained and well-organized unit, therefore, everytime the provincial government plans to conduct a military operation, they often take this force with them. Their achievements in killing VC got this hamlet named "The VC Annihilating Hero of the Nation" in 1962. Binh Quan hamlet was pacified by a RD team in 1965.

IV. Aspirations

Part of the rice fields have been requisitioned by the government to establish a Chieu Hoi village. To date, the three owners of the requisitioned land have not been given any compensation, therefore, they hoped that the Government would consider this case so that they could be paid for their loss.

The people want the government to provide help so the rice crops can be increased.

The school and health facilities need to be renovated and improved.

Provide support to the refugees so that they can make their living.

V. Interviewers' Impressions

Living in a fairly secure area, the people had great confidence in the hamlet administration and in the ability to defend their hamlet from the VC, because they voluntarily protect themselves. They have voluntarily regulated their living standards themselves, so it is very hard for the VC to penetrate the hamlet. On one side of the hamlet, which is 500 meters long, there are three outposts. The people themselves voluntarily dug trenches, set up fences and built outposts.

The self-sufficient and self-strengthening spirit of the Binh Quan people to defend their hamlet should be disseminated throughout the country.

Phu Nhon Hamlet (Category A)
Huong Tho Phu Village
Thu Thua District
Long An Province

GENERAL SITUATION

I. Social Aspect

The hamlet population is 931 persons, living in 132 houses. There are among them 40 Anti-Communist refugees living in 9 houses. These refugees are from Tuyen Nhon, Kien Tuong Province; and from the Tan Tui, Binh Phuoc, and Thu Thua Districts. These hamlet residents consist mostly of elderly people and children. There are some youngsters, 20 and younger, who have to go to the province capital every night for fear of being abducted by the VC. Most of the young men have joined the service.

Education

There is an elementary school with four grades: the 5th, 4th, 3rd, and 2nd grades, equivalent to the US 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades. The 4-classroom school is manned by five teachers - four women and one man - and holds its classes twice a day. The school population is 150 students. Those who go to the 1st grade (equivalent to the US 5th grade) have to go to the Long An Province capital for schooling. Approximately 10% of the students (17 of them) go to the First and Second Cycles of high school.

Public Health

There used to be a first-aid station in the hamlet, but it was closed when the health worker was drafted. No replacement is available to date. Besides, the inhabitants can go to the province capital, which is 500 meters away, for medical treatment without any difficulty.

Religion

Approximately 60% of the population are ancestral worshippers, 30% are Buddhists, and 5-6 families belong to the Cao Dai sect. There are no Catholics. There are two pagodas and two temples.

II. Economic Status

Most of the inhabitants make enough to live and there are no marked differences in their living conditions. Two thirds of the

farmers are tenant farmers; the rest of them till public land. There is a rice mill which employs a number of laborers. Five families engage in fishing. Others raise approximately 20,000 ducks, and grow vegetables and other staples. Besides, all families raise some poultry and hogs. Some persons work as common laborers, for VN\$80 per day without food or VN\$50 per day with food. They sometimes go to the province capital to sell goods in order to make extra money.

During 1966 40 families received 40 hogs, some cement, plus VN\$1500 to make the pig sties. One year later they will sell their hogs and refund the GVN for the piglets which were granted to them. The GVN cadre also visit the hamlet to instruct the inhabitants in the proper methods of animal husbandry and cultivation.

According to the hamlet chief, the 1966 agricultural loans earmarked for this hamlet amounts to one million piasters, classified into three categories:

Special phase loans: 5000 piasters or less, granted on requests.

Orientation phase loans: 40,000 piasters and less, granted on the basis of the industrial development capabilities.

Regular phase loans: 20,000 piasters and less, granted on the basis of tilled land acreage and animal husbandry capabilities.

Those people who receive the GVN loans are subjected to frequent control.

There have been some complaints that the hamlet chief was not fair in formulating the list of those peasants who wanted to borrow money from the GVN because some of them were given the money and some were not.

The hamlet residents were also given 100 cocks and hens. Since these poultry breeds are very hard to raise, only 20 of them are living.

They also have problems with fertilizer which is hard to get at the official rate of VN\$260 per bag. As a consequence, they have to buy it from some stores at an inflated rate of VN\$310 per bag.

Each person who possesses an ID card was given two liters of insecticide last year. They have received none this year. Concerning this matter, some well-to-do people buy almost all the insecticide stock at the cooperative in order to sell it at the black market. As a result, there is arising some discontent among those who have not received the insecticide.

With a view to providing land to the poor, the GVN is expropriating land from the rich, to sell it to the poor. Five of these poor families were granted the land for which they pay in installments.

III. Security

Since this hamlet is secure, the GVN is planning to build a troop dependent's quarters in the hamlet. Also, there is a Chieu Hoi Center temporarily headquartered at the hamlet town hall. This center will be moved to a new center, which is now under construction. The new center is located some 100 meters from the town hall, and is near the provincial route no. 4. For this reason, there are two additional Popular Force (PF) squads for the defense of the Chieu Hoi Center. According to the hamlet chief, this is very convenient, because in this way the hamlet and the Chieu Hoi headquarters can be better defended.

It might be said that the Phu Nhon Hamlet is secure day and night since it is located in the area of responsibility of a battalion organic to the ARVN 25th Infantry Division. This battalion sends its troops into the hamlet every night. There are three (3) watchtowers manned by sentinels around the clock. No families in the hamlet have their children active for the VC.

IV. Aspirations

The inhabitants of this hamlet have the same aspirations as those of the other hamlet residents. They expect the GVN to provide more schools, more teachers, more help through the government programs; to issue ration coupons to buy sugar and milk, etc. The refugees expect the GVN to give what has been promised to them.

V. Comments

According to the Province authorities, this is the most secure hamlet ever visited by the interviewers. Also, this hamlet gets the most help from the GVN. As a result, the population are very confident and optimistic.

But, being badly hit by the past crop failures which were caused by insects, these people eagerly look to the GVN for help so that this year's crops will be bountiful, to make up for the previous crop failures.

The hamlet chief was elected to office in 1964. In addition to his functions as hamlet chief, he has to undertake the difficult task of distributing gifts and determining the right recipients in the above programs. This delicate task (of issuing gifts and selecting the recipients) has made people discontent, as not everybody can be pleased.

Binh Cu Hamlet (Category A)
Binh Lap Village
Binh Phuoc District
Long An Province

GENERAL SITUATION

I. Social Aspect

The population is 769, living in 126 houses. Among the residents, 51 are Anti-Communist refugees (forming 9 families) coming from the Luong Hoa and Ben Luc areas. The education level is average. So far, there hasn't been any big land owner except one who died some time ago and who owned over one hundred hectares of rice fields. However, his land has been distributed to his children, each receiving from twenty to ninety hectares.

Education

In the hamlet there is a Catholic school conducting 2 pre-school, 2 fifth grade, and one class for every grade from elementary school fourth grade to high school sixth grade. The Long An public high school is also located here. Therefore, the students don't have to go far to get to school.

Medical Aspect

There is a small first-aid station here, but no maternity hospital. People usually go to town for medical care, the town being 1.5 kilometers from the hamlet. At the first-aid station there is a rural health worker in charge of dispensing medicine.

Religion

Sixty percent of the inhabitants are Catholic, the remainder are Buddhists, ancestral worshippers and Cao Dai followers. There is a big church, but no pagoda here.

II. Economic Aspect

The Binh Cu hamlet population are enjoying a fairly adequate life. The staple product is rice. As in other areas of the province, the land here yields two crops per year. In the past few years, some of the crops were destroyed by insects. People hope that this year's crop will be better.

Other resources derive from the growing of greens (vegetables, peas, melons, etc.). Every family raises animals. Hog-raising and farm credit programs are similar to those carried out in other hamlets. In 1965 the hamlet received 15 hogs for free distribution, and 27

others to raise on a profit-sharing basis. In 1966, people have been given 20 hogs with officials of USOM and GVN witnessing the ceremony.

Besides farming, the inhabitants work as laborers, and are paid VN\$70 per day. Many people have been able to get farm credit loans and feel quite satisfied with them. Since they can work in complete security in the hamlet, the residents have been able to pay back the loans.

III. Security

The hamlet is secure since it lies within the security zone in which are located two airfields (one for helicopters, the other for fixed wing) and two military outposts manned by a Popular Force unit and a Regional Force Mechanized Company. In the hamlet there are two policemen in charge of security control, and a Popular Force squad. This squad has requested to enter the Regional Force for higher pay, since many times the province Hqs has taken this squad for operations missions. They would still stay in the hamlet as before, to secure it. Close to the hamlet is a military dependents' compound.

IV. Aspirations

The people request the road linking the main road to the hamlet be paved. The request was submitted in 1965, and they have renewed it this year; however, so far nothing has been done.

They would like to ask the government to add a maternity hospital to the present first-aid station and assist the Anti-Communist refugees.

V. Comments

Since people here can enjoy security, they feel optimistic about their living. If they can receive more help, in particular more government assistance for farming improvement, they will be leading a prosperous life.

Houses are well-kept and spacious.

It is worthy to mention that happy relationships have been achieved among people of various creeds, who share in a firm and strong Anti-Communist spirit.

Xom Cong Hamlet (Category A)

Long Phu Village

Ben Luc District

Long An Province

General Situation:

Population:

Inhabitants number 1366 living in 215 houses. Of these, over 1,000 people (in 175 houses) are old residents, and over 300 (40 houses) are anti-communist refugees. These refugees come from Cau Duoc and Luong Hoa hamlets, in Ben Luc district.

Most of the people are elders and children. Youths are almost non-existent, they have enlisted in the army or work in the district or province capital. There are only a few intellectuals. As for economic status, about 6 families are above average, the remainder being either average or below. There are 5 or 6 high school students (2nd cycle). Overall, there is a poor level of education.

Public Health and Education

In the field of educational facilities, there is an elementary school (from Kindergarten to grade 1). Pupils attend school in two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Due to the attendance of refugees' children, there are not enough class-rooms.

There are about 10 high-school students (1st cycle) and 5 or 6 high school students in the 2nd cycle. As a whole, 80% of the students are elementary students.

In addition, the hamlet school has 6 class-rooms (from grade V to grade III) attended by 300 pupils in one class section. There are no illiterate children; all can read and write Vietnamese.

There is a first-aid station, with inadequate facilities. A soldier's wife is acting as a health worker. Really sick people must go to the dispensary in the district.

Religion

Buddhist: 50%

Roman Catholic: 40%

Cao Dai: 10%

There is no pagoda or church in the hamlet.

II. Economic Status

There are from 400 to 500 hectares of land in the hamlet, of which 200 hectares belong to landowners. The remainder is the property of the Hamlet Administration.

Main resource derives from rice cultivation. Most of the residents (70%) are tenant farmers working for landowners. A number of them have rented lands owned by the Hamlet Administration. Thirty % are landowners (from 1 to 4 hectares each).

In addition, people grow vegetables, raise fish, and plant reeds for manufacturing mats. The secondary resource comes from mat weaving. Each day a person can weave 2 mats, which brings a profit of about VN\$40. Most of the families raise pigs and chickens, and some inhabitants are laborers.

Pig-Raising Program

Two families were given each 3 pigs for breeding, and material for building model pig-sties. Now one pig-sty contains 30 piglets, and another has 17 piglets. Twenty other families were given 1 pig each, which will be paid for after one year.

One family bought 200 chickens (at low prices), which were raised in model chicken-houses.

Agricultural Credit

Within the "Agricultural Credit" program, loans from VN\$5,000 to VN\$15,000 are made to develop rice cultivation and animal husbandry. Only a few people want to borrow money, since they are afraid that in case of bad crops or business failure they can't afford to pay them back. However, about 40 residents got loans, VN\$30,000 down.

The Farmer's Association installed one water pump. Occasionally, powdered milk, cooking oil, and corn flour are distributed to the residents. Some temporary refugee families receive VN\$2,000, and each anti-communist refugee family was supposed to get VN\$3,500 and 300 kilos of rice. However, a large number of families haven't received any allowances.

III. Security

To insure security in the hamlet, the curfew hours are from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. People in need of moving around during the curfew hours must take along a light.

Security prevails in the hamlet in daytime as well as at night. However, the residents living at the end of the hamlet, near Long Kim post, have been worrying over VC attacks (when the post comes under enemy attack, the defenders often call in friendly support artillery, and the people are afraid that artillery shells may mistakenly cause casualties or material damage). More than a month ago, the VC launched an attack against the post.

Hamlet defending forces are made up of 20 Popular Forces (part of them are residents, and part are village militia.). The 50th Regiment (25th Division) is headquartered within the hamlet, thus making it more secure.

There are 6 or 7 families having relatives active for the VC; nevertheless they are leading a normal life, without being disturbed by the Hamlet Administration.

The hamlet chief sleeps in the hamlet at night. He was elected in 1963 for a two-year office tenure; since he is very popular he keeps running for another term.

The hamlet has had 4 "back to village" returnees, but they left it in order to work at Long An and Saigon. This Hamlet has been pacified since 1964. A team of Revolutionary Development cadre occasionally visits it. The main road is stone paved by a Self Help project, and has been dedicated recently.

IV. Aspirations

Like other hamlets, Xom Cong hamlet wants its educational and medical facilities to be expanded. Furthermore, large quantities of insecticide will be needed and more assistance provided to the Anti-Communist refugee families.

A cooperative will be set up whose purpose is to sell commodities at official prices. Procedure for the loans made by Agricultural Credit office will be simplified.

V. General Remarks

Due to the resettlement of a number of refugees, the standard of living of the residents, as a whole, has lowered. Although the area is quite secure, people have trouble making their living, partly because of the increase of the population and partly because of the present high cost of living.

Apart from that, the native residents are leading a quite stable and happy life.

Xuan-Hoa Hamlet (Category A)

Loi-Binh-Hoa Village

Thu-Thua District

Long-An Province

I. Social Status

The population numbers 1,344 living in 205 houses, of whom 800 are anti-Communist refugees, with 55 houses. Most of the refugees came from Long-Ngai-Thuan, My-Lac-Thanh (Thu-Thua District), and Tan-Dong (Kien-Tuong Province). The population consists mainly of elders and children. All the youths are either soldiers of Government forces or cadres of national agencies.

Education

There is an Elementary school with 12 class rooms and 13 teachers. Pupils attend the school in two class sections, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. All told, there are 22 classes from grade V to grade I. A female teacher, the daughter of the owner of a rice mill, stays at the hamlet; the other teachers leave the hamlet after classes. Some students have a High School Certificate (2nd cycle) and there are about 20 high school students. Most of the children from the poor families have finished their elementary education, and are engaged in rice farming, after failing the entrance examination to the 2nd grade of Long-An public high school. Those who have failed have no chance of continuing their education, because they can't afford to pay the school fees of private high schools.

Public Health

There is a first-aid station with a private male nurse. Medicines are inadequate, and critical medical cases are sent to the provincial hospital.

A request for building a maternity facility has been approved. Expenditures are met, in part, by funds raised by the residents.

Occasionally, U.S. medical teams arrive at the hamlet to distribute medicines to the people.

Religion

The religions of the hamlet residents are as follows:

Buddhism	30%
Ancestral Worship	30%
Cao Dai	35%
Roman Catholicism	5%

Prominant figures are the Hamlet Chief and the defending forces chief.

Hamlet Chief

The Xuan-Hoa Hamlet Chief was elected in 1960 for 2 years, but popular chiefs keep running their office after their term is over. He was re-elected by hamlet residents in 1964. He sleeps in the hamlet at night. The chief stated that "Xuan-Hoa had been pacified in 1964."

Some of the hamlet residents said they had run into trouble since the airstrips were built on the Xuan-Hoa - Long-An road. People were not allowed to cross the airstrips and had to take a very long by-pass lane, which was muddy in rainy seasons, making the circulation very inconvenient. However, from July 21, 1966, they are temporarily authorized to cross the airstrips. The crossing may be a danger from planes.

II. Economic Status

A. Main Resources

The main occupation is rice farming; 60% of the population are farmers. Long-An rice is one of the best in the country. Like other parts of the province, this hamlet has two crops a year.

About 20% of the population own land, from 1 to 6 hectares. The remainder is mostly tenant farmers, a few residents are policemen or soldiers.

Very few of the inhabitants grow fruit trees or vegetables, as available lands are occupied by anti-Communist refugees.

B. Secondary Resources

The hamlet has about 40,000 ducks. Each family raises a small number of chickens and pigs; being near the rice mill, there is plenty of bran available for feeding the pigs. There is no pig-raising pilot center in the hamlet.

Very few people are engaged in small trade. In addition to rice farming, a number of residents are farm laborers working for the land-owners. Male laborers earn VN\$70 as daily wages, female laborers earn only VN\$40. Some are workers in the rice-mill or in the saw-mill. The output of the rice-mill is 800 kilos an hour. There is no market in the hamlet, the nearest market being 3 kilometers away.

C. Government Programs

a. Animal raising: Last year, pigs for breeding were sold to 16 families (3 pigs each). Pigs were paid for after one year. In addition, 15 pigs were given to 15 poor families.

b. Agricultural Credit: In the present year, 32 families got loans, from VN\$3,000 to VN\$5,000.

c. Fertilizers and Insecticides: The chemical products can be bought at shops, but there are not sufficient amounts.

d. Self-help Projects: The residents are requesting that the main road connecting Long An to Phu Khuong (via Xuan Hoa hamlet) be paved.

III. Security

The people enjoy fairly good security. Security is best in the day time. At night, in order to ensure better protection of the hamlet, people are not allowed to move about, or the VC might disguise themselves as hamlet residents and carry out subversion. Being near the airstrips, security is protected by the troops in charge of its security.

Defending forces are made up of a platoon of Popular Forces (about 30 militia, all hamlet residents). In addition, the airstrip is defended by a company of Regional Forces, the 303rd Company. With the hamlet being heavily guarded, the VC do not launch attacks against it. Occasionally they set up ambushes to fire on the defenders, or launch propaganda by means of megaphones at night, at the end of the hamlet. Hamlet residents worry about enemy subversion, for they both fear and hate the VC.

Most of the families are soldiers' dependents. There are no relatives who are active in the VC. The hamlet is provided with protective shelters. All youths of draft age are members of Popular Forces.

IV. Aspirations

Hamlet residents wish that there could be another road connecting the hamlet with the province. If possible, the airstrip will be moved to another place. The people want security and peace so they can make their living.

The anti-Communist refugees want allowances to be granted them, as promised by the government.

The people want justice in all programs.

A dispensary and a maternity clinic with adequate medicines to be built.

V. General Remarks

In general, the people enjoy a fair standard of living. However, in some respects there are quite a few unavoidable deficiencies, which make the residents unsatisfied towards the administration. Understanding between residents and officials has to be obtained in order to remedy these shortcomings.

People as a whole are confident in the present situation, because they can earn enough money to make their living. Everything is depending on the security factor.

Cau Ngang Hamlet (Category A)

Binh Luong Tay Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

The population is 614 (103 houses) including 18 refugees of the permanent settlement category (3 families) and 20 temporary refugees. (3 families). These families have come from the areas of Luong Nhut Phu, My Lac Thanh (Thu Thua), and Ben Luc (Kien Tuong).

The former hamlet chief was killed in a VC attack in November 1965. From November 1965 to April 1966, there was no hamlet chief. The hamlet affairs were directed by the deputy chief. The present hamlet chief was assigned in April 66, upon decision of the provincial government. This hamlet was first constructed in 1962 and then rebuilt in 1964.

Educational and Medical

Since there is no school here, the children have to go to the hamlet of Binh Luong Tay, located 1 kilometer away, for class. Most of the inhabitants know how to read and write. The children have completed elementary school. Twenty of them are attending high school, and 3 or 4 are preparing to take the Baccalaureate Examination 1st part.

There is no dispensary or maternity hospital in the hamlet. People are short of medicine. The hamlet chief has submitted a request for the establishment of a dispensary to higher authorities, however, it hasn't been approved. The request was first submitted in 1964 and since then has been renewed many times. Sick people have to go to the province or district capital for treatment.

The people are Buddhists (55%) or Ancestral Worshippers (45%). The hamlet lacks those prominent figures that exert some influence over the public.

II. Economic Aspect

98% of the population are farmers. The rice fields here yield good crops. In the previous years, in various areas, the yield was poor because of blight, and yet here, things were much better. The farmers transplant rice seedlings here earlier than in other places, therefore the harvest season comes in earlier. The rice here is known as the best of the province. The land produces two crops a year.

Concerning private land, there are four families owning 3 to 5 hectares, and over twenty, 1-2 hectares. Most of the remaining inhabitants work on public land.

Lessees of private land have to pay the owners from 30% up of the yield.

Tenants of public land have to pay the government 1,200 to 1,500 piasters a hectare per year. However, the rentals depend on the grade of the soil.

Crops in past year were not as good as this year's. With the assistance of government technicians along with the dissemination of magazines telling about the use of fertilizers, crops have been good.

In addition to farming, people also practice animal husbandry. Domestic animals are raised by every family. There are 20 families having a total of 10,000 ducks. Some people raise fish and grow greens such as melons, beans, maize, and other vegetables. About six residents have "Lambretta" motor tricycles for passenger transport between Thu Thua and Long An.

Government Projects

Hog-Raising Program:

Not actively carried on. It is said that once, 3 or 4 hogs have been distributed, however, they have all died since nobody knew how to take care of them.

Agricultural credit loans:

People can get loans from 4,000 piasters down. Loans are on the basis of 1,000 piasters per hectare with a 1% interest rate, paid off at the end of the harvest season. People have to make applications which are sent to district headquarters for approval, however, there still are people who are complaining about the unfairness as to the granting of these loans.

Farmers' associations

These associations have sold fertilizers on credit and people have to pay back only at the end of the harvest season. 300 kilograms of fertilizers are allotted for each hectare. The fertilizer cost 165 piasters per hundred kilograms.

The hamlet residents are also distributed milk ration cards. Milk is sold three times a month; each family is entitled to buy 3 to 5 cans. Sugar is sold upon presentation of the family census card. Each family can buy 24 kilograms of sugar.

In the past, there have been visiting parties which came and distributed clothings and medicine to the needy.

III. Security

The area is secure during daytime; however, at night, the VC often come near the far-end of the hamlet to conduct propaganda by means of a megaphone and to steal the poultry. However, they haven't been able to any damage on the hamlet.

There is a Popular Force squad (about 9 men) here in charge of security. The men of the squad are the hamlet residents. Before, a platoon was stationed here; after the fighting in 1965 in which the former hamlet chief was killed, they were reduced to the present strength. Near by the hamlet (about 900 meters) there is an outpost manned by a Regional Force Company, this has contributed in part to the maintenance of the hamlet security.

Circulation between hamlets is fairly safe.

There are two families who have some relatives in the VC and 13% of the population will not commit themselves to either side. They dare not show their support toward either side for fear of reprisals.

The remaining people are good residents, with a strong belief in the national cause, and a willingness to carry out the reconstruction of their hamlet.

IV. Aspirations

The population wish to see the government approve of their request asking for the construction of a hamlet dispensary and maternity hospital.

They want to have a new elementary school building.

They wish to see government projects for rural improvement be carried out on a more active and broader basis.

Help should be given to the permanent and temporary refugees and needy people.

Comments

The population of the hamlet of Cau Ngang is enjoying a good life in regard to security and living standards.

There is no complaint voiced against the hamlet administration.

The dirt-built road between Thu Thua and inter-provincial highway # 4, running across the hamlet, is beneficial to the people. The residents feel fairly satisfied with their present conditions.

Vam Thu Hamlet (Category B)

Binh Phong Thanh Village

Thu Thua District

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Situation

The total population of the hamlet is 2,360 persons, of whom 45% are anti-Communist refugees, and live in 416 houses. The hamlet is divided into 2 sections. In section I native residents, and in section II the refugees (The refugees come from Long Ich Thuan, My Lac Thuan and Thung Dong hamlets). Refugees of 1965 have not received the resettlement allowances, only those of the present year have. They are having a hard time making a living. Most of them are labourers or basket weavers. Sometimes they have no jobs and must live on allowances granted by the Social Welfare Department. Due to a shortage of lands, only 30% of the population live by farming, 20% on animal husbandry, 5% on fishery and the rest is made up of laborers. As for the economic status, about 2-3% are above average, and the rest is either average or below average.

In the educational point of view, 70% of the youths are attending elementary schools, 30% high school, first cycle, and 10-15% high school, 2nd cycle. Part of the youths are drafted into the Army the remainder are students.

Education: There is only one 4 class-room elementary school. The pupils are attending classes in 2 shifts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. About 30% of the pupils are not admitted to the school and have to go to other schools outside the hamlet. High school students must go to the province capital and university students to Saigon.

Health: There are no medical facilities but there is one private male nurse. A team of "Revolutionary Development Cadre" with 3 nurses are operating in the hamlet at this time. From time to time medical teams come to the hamlet.

Religion: 80% are Cao Dai, 20% are Buddhists. Cao Dai worshippers have two temples.

II. Economic Status:

The residents income is chiefly from farming with some animal husbandry, fishing and hired laborer. The standard of living is low, large numbers of refugees contribute to a certain extent to the lowering of the general standard of living.

As above mentioned, the "Long An III Pacification team" is building the hamlet. When it is finished the people can obtain allowances from the government. So far, they have received nothing. Only a small quantity of insecticide powder was provided by the farming administration.

III. Security:

2 Squads of popular forces and 59 cadres of "Revolutionary Development" are protecting the hamlet from the VC's attacks. Other posts manned by regular forces give adequate support for the defenders. Two years ago, this was an insecure area, but now security is being restored. At nights, there have been some VC harassments. About 2 or 3% of the families have relatives who are in the VC ranks. Most of the families are made up of ARVN soldiers' dependents.

IV. Aspirations:

The refugees wish to be granted resettlement allowances:
More class-rooms for the school.
Information hall and first-aid station to be set up
The main road across the hamlet to be paved.
Revolutionary Development programs would be activated.

V. General Remarks

Due to the scarcity of lands, the residents' standard of living is low. "Revolutionary Development" programs are not fully implemented, however the people feel optimistic about the coming months, when the task of "Long An III Pacification team" is finished in the hamlet.

Ap Binh Nhut Hamlet (Category B)

Binh Nhut Village

Ben Luc District

Long An Province

General Situation:

Binh Nhut village consists of 5 hamlets. Hamlet 4 and 5 are secure but the others are not. Hamlet 4 is being consolidated by a Revolutionary Development team operating since June 9, 1966. The task of consolidation is scheduled to be finished by July 30, 1966, on which date the hamlet administration will take-over. However, it may last one or two more weeks.

The 55 man RD team is divided into two groups: 1 group for Development and 1 group for Armed Propaganda. To date, the VC has not shown any reaction against the team. The hamlet chief, though in charge of the hamlet for more than 6 years, was officially appointed on March 1, 1966.

Social Status:

The population totals 1600, living in 204 houses, of whom 600 are Anti-Communist refugees who came from Can Duoc and Tan Tru. Of these there are 7 families having dependents active for the VC. However, they are not disturbed by local authorities.

Most of the residents are old people and children. Youths (from 19 to 36) are almost inexistent, because they have been drafted into the Army.

Health and Education

The hamlet has no school. Pupils attend the village school, situated on the main road, within the boundaries of the hamlet.

The 7 class-room village school is building two more class-rooms to accommodate the growing number of students. 9 elementary teachers (4 male, 5 female) are taking turns giving lessons to the students from grade 5 to grade 1 of Elementary Education.

There are no intellectuals in the hamlet.

There is neither a first-aid station nor maternity clinic in the hamlet. Once in a while, medical teams treat sick people and give out medicines.

Hamlet administration is asking for the building of a maternity clinic.

Religion:

Buddhist: 60%, Ancestral Worship: 20%, Roman Catholic: 2 or 3 families, Cao Dai: 5 or 6 families.

Economic Status:

Main resource derives from rice-cultivation about 70% of the residents are tenant-farmers. Most of the refugees are engaged in mat weaving as a means of living. Depending on the type of rice-fields, hamlet farmers have 1 or 2 rice-crops a year. Good crops may yield up to 150 gia (3,000 kilos) of rice per hectare. In the past three years, due to blight, bad crops produced only 30 to 40 gia of rice per hectare.

Landowners having from 20 to 80 hectares - about 2-3%

Landowners having from 10 to 20 hectares - about 6-7%

Landowners having from 5 to 6 hectares - about 1%

In addition to rice farming, residents grow vegetables (peas, melons etc.) weave mats, or are engaged in small trade.

Laborers' wages vary from VN\$55 to 70 per day.

Animal Raising

Each family raises pigs & poultry. The hamlet has a flock of about 8,000 ducks.

Government's Programs:

Agricultural Credit:

15 people got loans (VN\$10,000 to 40,000) for rice-farming, animal husbandry (pigs, poultry) and fish-raising.

In addition, some poorer people received loans of VN\$2,000 to 5,000.

Four families were given pigs, for breeding, and materials for building pig-sties.

Land Reform:

Cadres are provided to advise people in matters of cultivation and animal husbandry.

Fertilizer is sold at low-prices and insecticides were once distributed 1 liter per hectare. They have no insecticides at present.

Chickens for breeding are given only to those who participate in "meetings" organized by Hamlet Administration.

200 cans of condensed milk are distributed to the hamlet, 3 cans for each family having a milk issue-slip.

In general the government's programs are carried out by the Hamlet Administration.

Security:

There are no defending forces in the hamlet. The Revolutionary Development team operating in the hamlet is activating a squad of Popular Forces. There are a few youths in the hamlet, most of them have left to join the national forces or are workers at the district or elsewhere.

In the past the hamlet was pacified and the barbed wire protective fence is still in good shape. Besides it is protected by 25th Division soldiers. At night hamlet residents lock the door of their houses and no one can enter.

There is a cluster of houses situated by the main road whose occupants come from various provinces which is controlled with difficulty. The VC has set fire to some of them when there were no troops to defend them.

IV. Aspirations

Like people in other hamlets, the residents want the Government to implement its program, granting of allowances, giving of pigs, chickens for breeding, distribution of insecticides etc...

A dispensary with a maternity clinic to be built in order to take care of the health of the people.

An elementary school be built.

Resettlement allowances and rice to be given to the refugees.

For friendly forces to stop firings at the hamlet causing material damage and casualties among the people.

V. General Remarks

The residents have a normal life. They enjoy being in a secure area, at night the hamlet is guarded by elements of the 25th Infantry Division.

Since the arrival of the Revolutionary Development team, the hamlet is being organized better. New registers are being kept.

In general, the residents feel optimistic about the future, however, due to the rising cost of living, those who are engaged in small trade and the refugees who are not rice farmers worry over their living standard.

Vinh

Vinh An Hamlet (Category C)

Vinh Ngai Village

Binh Phuoc District

Long An Province

General Situation:

1. Social Status:

Population: There are a total of 372 persons registered at Vinh An hamlet, broken down as follows:

151 male: 7 elderly persons
 38 youngsters
 30 teenagers
 120 children

It is noticed, however, that there are at present very few young men and young girls left at the hamlet as they either are drafted into military service, or work in the province, district, and even in Saigon. Upon entering the village, the survey team saw only elderly persons and children. The hamlet residents live in 60 houses scattered in small clusters. The hamlet is surrounded by a barbed wire fence.

Education:

The hamlet residents are poorly educated. There is no "elite" (educated) class. A number of illiterate old men and women belong to the "older generation." Most children have completed their elementary education at the province and local public schools. There is a shortage of schools and teachers near the hamlet. There is at the village a four class-room school manned by four teachers. A number of students do not attend this school because it is located in an insecure hamlet. As a consequence, some go to another school outside the hamlet, near the province capital. Others attend the school at the "inner" hamlet which is also located in an insecure area.

Public Health: There was a hamlet first aid stations manned by two health workers who are appreciated by the population because of their devotion to duty, however, this aid station was, destroyed by the VC a short time ago. Now the patients have to be evacuated to the district or province dispensary. Once, a foreign medical team came here to give inoculation shots and dispense medicine.

Religion: Ninety percent of the inhabitants are Buddhists and ancestral worshippers. The rest of them are Cao daists with a very few Catholics.

II. Economic Status:

Ninety-five percent of the population are farmers who grow two crops per year. The past few years saw a decrease in farm yield caused by the insecure situation. Last year's harvest was poor because of the blights and insects. This year's crop promises to be much better. Due to this loss the GVN provided loans to the people who would pay one per cent interest after the harvest was done. Few people got the loans and this made the others angry. The loans were provided on the basis of acreage. In addition to farming the hamlet residents also raise pigs and poultry, however this does not provide much income.

The items issued by the GVN, such as DDT insecticide, fertilizers and rice seed are not enough. The gifts of hogs was much better, 16 families getting hogs and cement for the construction of pig sties. Instructions for the care of these hogs is given by the animal husbandry service. Those which die of disease will be replaced. During 1966 there have been no gifts. Loans are granted twice a year.

US Aid: According to the hamlet residents the US Aid items such as rice, milk and medicine should be delivered to the hamlets without the intermediary of the villages, as some never reach the hamlet.

Traffic: All the roads linking the villages and hamlets are secure in the daytime. The river traffic from the hamlets to province is good.

Since the Vinh An hamlet is located between the secure and insecure areas, half the hamlet is secure, the other half is not, the inhabitants have to pay two taxes - one to the GVN and one to the VC. Things are getting worse because of the poor crop of last year and especially because of the increasing living cost. As a result, the inhabitants' living conditions are decreasing.

III. Hamlet Security Status:

Vinh An hamlet lies between the secure and insecure areas. The houses are built scattered. This makes the defense extremely difficult. There is only a thin barbed wire fence around the hamlet. As a result, the VC often infiltrate the hamlet at night to perform sabotage. They destroyed the first aid station and bridge, and killed six Popular Force men. One VC - carrying explosive charges made an attempt to destroy the water tank but was killed. (Note: the tank was destroyed a week later). The inhabitants do not stay in their hamlet at night. Each evening, they all go to the province capital, 4-5 kilometers away, to spend the night.

They are extremely afraid of being captured by the VC, who at times are clad in ARVN uniforms. They intimidate them against building the new life hamlet and try to force them to return to their former hamlets. The VC also destroy the barbed wire fences.

The hamlet defense is manned by a Popular Force platoon which is commanded by a veteran of 27-year service, part in the French colonial army.

Very few families have children in the V.C. The local government does not cause these families any difficulty.

The residents complained that a few weeks ago, three mortar shells, fired by ARVN, hit the hamlet, wounded six and killed four of the inhabitants. The local government promised to pay indemnity, but they have not received it yet. This accident made them unhappy since they had moved into the government controlled new life hamlet, and still their lives were not protected.

IV. Aspirations

The hamlet residents wish assistance in getting breeding hogs. Swine and ox raising is relatively easy and more profitable since these animals are less susceptible to diseases. If the GVN does not have enough hogs to give one to each person, it is desirable that the government draw lots and the winners get the hogs.

It is also advisable to provide facilities for animal husbandry, training and documents to assist in its development.

Taxes levied by the province government on the goods imported into the province capital be reduced.

The programs for land reform, school construction and recruitment of teachers should be increased.

The hamlet defense force be increased and those ARVN soldiers who steal chickens and coconut during the military operations be punished.

General Comments:

The Vinh An hamlet residents live in an atmosphere of fear day and night. They eagerly look forward to the end of the war so they may live in peace and freedom. They have endured many hardships, but have confidence in the future.

These people who have confidence in the GVN in spite of all the VC threats, are compelled to leave their hamlets every evening in order to spend the night in the province capital, deserve full material and moral support.

They are deeply moved when receiving gifts, no matter how small.

Thu Tuu Hamlet (Category C)

Khanh Hau Village

Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Situation:

There are approximately 680 inhabitants in the Thu Tuu hamlet, living in 120 houses. Except for the 1 or 2% of these residents who are wealthy the rest have the same living conditions.

Upon arriving at the hamlet, the interviewers met mostly elderly women and children. Few young men were seen.

Education and Health

There is no elementary school in the hamlet. The children have to walk 2 Km to a nearby hamlet to attend the school run by the district. Most of the students have completed their elementary education. A number of them have finished their First and Second cycle education, and two of them are attending the Saigon University.

Concerning public health, there is no dispensary. There is one dispensary for the whole village run by one male nurse and one midwife. It is three kilometers away. As a result, the sick or women nearing childbirth have to walk to the village dispensary. There are no major diseases affecting the inhabitants' daily life. Two or three months ago, one public health truck came to distribute medicine, but it has not returned.

Religion:

Most of the inhabitants are Buddhists, the remainder are Cao Dai.

Living conditions:

Their living conditions are fairly good as all of them engage in farming. However, they are not well-off because of the crop failure which occurred a few years ago. Despite the rising living cost, the peasants' living conditions are not affected as they can produce their own food by growing vegetables, raising fish and poultry.

Life in the hamlet is closely related to security which promotes farming. The refugees' living conditions are not very satisfactory as they have to work as common laborers or hired servants.

The routes of communication are secure in day not at night.

II. Economic Status

Most of the hamlet residents are farmers who raise rice, vegetables, and fruits. Some raise fish and animals.

The GVN Programs:

The province authorities are implementing the following programs:

Distribution of a limited quantity of hogs and poultry. Not all the inhabitants receive them.

Agricultural loan programs provide funds so farmers can borrow them for the improvement of their land. Priority of this program is given to the veterans and dependents of the war dead.

Programs for the instalment buying of fertilizers sponsored by the farming cooperatives also provide the farmers with corn and rice seed.

III. Security Status:

Thu Tuu hamlet is secure only in daytime. It is harassed by the VC who come at night to cut the wire fences, threaten and force those who have settled in the hamlets to return to their former homes. Despite their resentment against the VC the people do not voice their grievance for fear of VC reprisal.

The force defending this area consists of only two Popular Force (PF) platoons. Their members, all hamlet residents, go about their work in daytime and are given guard duty at night. During the last month, there has been an increase in the VC's terrorist activity. Since they came in great numbers, the PF platoons defending the hamlet were forced to pull back to the village.

IV. Aspirations

The hamlet residents wish that the GVN would assist in building a school in the hamlet so that the young students will not have to walk a long distance to another hamlet to attend school.

All want to live in peace and/or be provided security. They want the GVN to increase the hamlet defense.

They need a first-aid station or dispensary to provide medical care.

They need help from the cooperatives to provide the hamlet residents with instructions on farming.

They wish to buy cloth, milk, sugar etc. at official rates.

Allowances should be paid to each refugee.

Tam Hiep Hamlet (Category C)
Nhi Binh Village
Thu Thua District
Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social

The actual population cannot be assessed as a result of the lack of security. The approximate figure is 553 inhabitants; 400 of them live in 78 houses built within the strategic hamlet, and the rest of them live in 27 houses outside the strategic hamlet fence. There are among these inhabitants 11 anti-communist refugee families coming from the Binh Chanh, Binh Nhut, Binh Duc, and Nuy Binh hamlets, in the Tan Tru District.

Like in other half-secure hamlets, only women, old men, and children live here. All the young men have joined the ARVN or Popular Force.

Agriculture: The majority of the inhabitants make their living by farming.

Education: The hamlet does not have its own school, but the village school is located very close to the hamlet. This school has 13 classrooms, from the 5th grade (first year of schooling) to the 1st grade (5th year of schooling). It holds classes twice a day. 15-20 of the inhabitants go to high school -- two of them possess the first part baccalaureate.

Public Health: There is no first aid station in the hamlet. The inhabitants who need medical care have to go to the district dispensary, located 2 kilometers away. There is one mid-wife in the hamlet.

Once in awhile a medical team visits the hamlet and distributes medicine and clothing to all the hamlet residents.

Religion: Two thirds of the population are Buddhists, the rest are ancestral worshippers. There is one temple in the hamlet.

Population Composition: There are few landlords. Only one family has about 100 hectares of farmland. The other families have 3-5 hectares. Most of the families are tenant farmers who till one hectare of rented land.

II. Economy

Like the inhabitants of other hamlets, the Tam Hiep hamlet residents are mostly farmers who pay the GVN 1000-2000 VN\$ per hectare if they till public land, or they pay the landlords 50-70 "gia" per hectare (one gia is equivalent to 20 kilos). The others, who work as common laborers, are paid VN\$60 a day with food, or VN\$80 a day without food.

Approximately 10 families make their living by raising ducks. Most of the families have a few hogs and poultry, some vegetables and melons. Business is non-existent.

Little help on the part of the GVN is rendered to the population. Last year, the GVN did provide them with rice seed--20 kilos per hectare. The inhabitants can buy fertilizers from the Farmers' Association and pay for it after the harvest is finished. Sprayers and insecticide are furnished, 2 kilos of insecticide per hectare.

Last years' crops were destroyed by the blight and each hectare yielded only 30 "gia". The Agricultural Loan Agency may provide loans up to VN\$5,000; but very few farmers are granted loans.

Only 20-25 milk ration coupons are issued to the entire hamlet. As a result there is not enough to meet the people's need. Ten breeding hogs were issued to the hamlet.

III. Security

The hamlet security is not satisfactory either day or night. It is defended by two PF (Popular Force) squads consisting of 19 men who take turns at guard duty. These men are all hamlet residents.

When the survey team arrived, these men were on an operation. Approximately half an hour later, a PF squad came back and led the interviewers into the hamlet. However, for security reasons, only two families living on the edge of the hamlet were interviewed.

The hamlet chief, who survived two VC assassination attempts, does not spend the night in the hamlet.

At 1500 hours on July 14, 1966, the VC, posing as ARVN troops, came into the hamlet and assassinated one PF man and abducted another.

Most of the hamlet fence was destroyed by the VC and has not been repaired.

Only 20-25 milk ration coupons are issued to the entire hamlet. As a result there is not enough to meet the people's need. Ten breeding hogs were issued to the hamlet.

III. Security

IV. Comments

The inhabitants' difficult living conditions are attributed to the lack of security. As a result, they cannot engage in long-range projects and seem to live from day to day.

It is the teams' opinion that the GVN must provide security for the population, then proceed to those activities which benefit the masses, such as pacification team operations, hamlet rehabilitation, and stepped up help rendered to the residents. All these activities are instrumental in bringing about a happy life for the hamlet residents.

Cau Tre Hamlet (Category C)
Loi Binh Nhon Village
Thu Thua District
Long An Province

General Situation

I. Social Aspect

Beyond the hamlet of Cau Tre is a large open field, an insecure area. Part of the hamlet is unsafe because of VC terroristic activity and because ARVN artillery fires have indiscriminately hit the hamlet. The people have to leave for another area of the hamlet. This area is a narrow strip of land, lying between the river and the dirt-built road running from Long An to Phu Khuong.

This survey was conducted only in a small area which the people first settled in 1960-1961. There are 80 to 90 houses with a population of 216, not including those who are still living on the other side of the field in the insecure area. In this area 66% of the inhabitants are war-refugees, coming from the insecure section of the hamlet.

Under the Ngo Dinh Diem administration, those who moved their houses into the hamlet received VN\$500. Since then, there has been no help granted. It may be that the hamlet has been considered insecure and the government no longer pays attention to it.

The war-refugees have been given each VN\$700 from the social welfare funds plus some rice and maize.

The inhabitants consist of elderly men, women, and children, and servicemen's families. There is not a youth or any educated person in the hamlet.

Educational and Medical Aspects

There is no school, so the children have to go to Xuan Hoa or Phu Khuong for classes. Most only finish elementary school. Some have been unable to go to high school for failing the 7th grade entrance examination. There are only about 10 students who attend high school.

A first-aid station has been set up in the house of a private nurse who is living there. Medicine is scarce. There is no official public dispensary.

Religion: 60% of the population are Buddhists; 30% Cao Dai followers of the Tam Ky sect. There are very few Catholics.

II. Economic Aspect

The majority of the population are tenant farmers. Each year, they have to pay the landowners 30 to 40 da (a da is 20 Kilograms) of rice per hectare. Since most of the people come from other areas, they do not own land here. There are only some eight 1-6 hectare landowners. The ricefields in this area produce two crops a year. A crop yields 100 to 150 da of rice per hectare, while a poor one produces 30 to 50 da.

The people grow very few vegetables. In addition to farming, the residents live by working as laborers and are paid 40 to 50 piasters a day. Some raise poultry and hogs, some weave mats, some fish. There is also a producer of "Nuoc Mam" (fish-sauce) here.

The economic life of the hamlet is considered as low.

Agricultural Credit Loans: People can hardly borrow farm credit loans. Only landowners are able to get them. The poor are not authorized to get even a small sum like 1000 piasters. The people state that only rich people can borrow the money. There is no other government sponsored projects.

III. Security

This hamlet is not secure. Some construction work has to be done as well as the barbed wire fence to be built, since the older one has been destroyed by the VC.

There is no protection force in the hamlet. When the survey team visited the hamlet the officials of Xuan Hoa and Phu Khuong sent out some Popular Force Soldiers for security.

At night the VC Often launch harassment attacks, or call on the population to turn against the government, or collect taxes. The people have paid as much as 1,000 piasters per hectare of land.

The hamlet administration has been established for the sake of form. They do nothing. The hamlet chief has to spend his nights in town away from the hamlet. There is no family whose members are VC followers, as most of the families are servicemen's dependents.

IV. Aspirations

The population have been complaining a lot about those soldiers who, while going on operations, have come and got coconuts without paying. (Even the chickens of the hamlet chief have been taken away.) They request the government to correct these actions.

They wish to have a protection force stationed in the hamlet for security. The poor would like to have government loans to help improve their standard of living. However, because of administration procedures and other difficulties, it is impossible for the people to borrow money. When they fill out application forms they are told they can borrow 5,000 piasters, however, when they get the loan, they receive only 1,000 or 2,000 piasters. They wish to be treated on a fair basis, free from oppression and robbery, and to see the government pay attention to those poor inhabitants who are living in this insecure area.

They would like to see the government implement large scale programs aimed at rural life improvement. Special assistance should be given to the refugees of both the permanent and temporary categories.

V. Comments

Since the area is not secure, people cannot work with peace of mind. The hamlet looks desolate, living standards are miserable. This is particularly true with the permanent and temporary refugees.

Phu Khuong Hamlet (Category C)
My An Village
Thu Thua District
Long An Province

On its visit to Phu Khuong Hamlet, the team was lucky enough to see Mr. Muoi Sinh, Mr. Nguyen Van Kiem, village chief of My An Phu village, at the home of Mr. Nguyen Van Phan, the Phu Khuong Hamlet chief.

After some introductory talks, the village chief, Mr. Nguyen Van Kiem, voiced his complaints about the operations of the Agricultural Loans, the Anti-Communist Refugee Relief Program, the breeding hog programs, etc.... He said, "I am told by the local government to submit no ends of lists for the hamlet residents; after these lists have been submitted, nothing is heard from them." As a result of this, the inhabitants lost their respect for him, because he had promised to provide them with things which the higher authorities had promised to provide him. He wondered where all these gifts and allowances are.

As for Mr. Muoi Sinh, he seemed extremely tired and dispirited after many years of vigorous Anti-Communist fighting, which so far has got nowhere. Yet he is being tracked down day and night by the VC. The village authorities occasionally invite him to a party and ask his advice on the village and hamlet problems. In this way he can feel less lonely and can comfort each other because they are being ignored by the district and province authorities and nobody knows who they are and what they have done and are doing in order to defend the countryside.

General Situation

Social

Population: The total population is 1775 persons, living in 128 houses broken down into 27 inter-family groups. Among these inhabitants are 29 registered Anti-Communist refugees and an unknown number of unregistered refugees who come from the insecure hamlets and from the Tan Dong and Kien Tuong villages.

There are very few young men working at home; most of them have joined the hamlet defense force which needs more manpower to man the hamlet post. This post has been attacked three times by the VC. As a result, the workers of the hamlet population are women and children. There are over 50 widows of dead hamlet defenders.

Education: The hamlet has an 8 classroom elementary school teaching the 5th to 1st grades (equivalent to the US 1st and 5th grades). This school is old and small; the hamlet has completed the construction of a new one which has not been dedicated yet, pending the order from higher authorities. The new school building has 5 clean and airy classrooms. Besides, there are 4 other rooms which can accommodate students. The classes are held either in the morning (0800-1100 hrs) or in the afternoon (1100-1400 hrs) and are so arranged as to suit the students and teachers schedules.

Public Health: A small first-aid station is located at the home of Mr. Tu', the hamlet health worker. The medicine shortage is critical. It was said that Mr. Tu' does not safeguard the medicine, and let it fall into the hands of the VC, and had been dismissed once.

Religion: Phu Khuong Hamlet was once the cradle of the Cao Dai religious sect. As a result, 95% of the inhabitants are Caodaists, with the exception of a few people, mostly refugees, who are Buddhists.

In the hamlet there is a Cao Dai temple. There is also a Buddhist pagoda built in 1941, but now abandoned as a result of VC sabotage and the lack of security. This is substantiated by a sign hung at the pagoda entrance, which reads "Zone of Death".

II. Economy.

The majority of the local people are farmers. Some make their living by making mattresses. They are having a hard time because of the lack of security. Among the 29 Anti-Communist refugee families, only 18 were given relief food, but no allowances! The dependents of the war dead received death allowances, which did not amount to much.

Main sources of income: The hamlet inhabitants are mostly tenant rice farmers or common laborers. Their low income is partly because they do not raise other staple crops or animals. The local people here are wondering whether or not the recent duck pest which killed many ducks has been caused by the insecticides. There is in this hamlet Mrs. Hoi Dong, who owns over 100 hectares of land which she rents at the annual rate of VN\$2,000 per hectare of choice land and VN\$1,500 per hectare of poor land. The daily salary is VN\$60 for a man and VN\$40 for a woman; no food is provided. There are two crops each year. The main crop can yield from 100 to 150 gia (a gia is a grain measuring unit equivalent to 20 kilos) and the secondary crop can yield 60-70 gia. During the past few years, the crops failed as a result of the pests. This year's crops are very promising.

The secondary income is derived from animal husbandry, odd jobs, mattress manufacturing, and small businesses.

The GVN Programs and Assistance: It might be said that the hamlet residents, with the exception of a number of refugees who had been given some mosquito nets, blankets, and rice, have gotten no help from the GVN.

Agricultural Loan Agency: This Agency did lend some money to the peasants for farming and animal raising purposes. But it provides less than it promised (VN\$1,000, 2,000, or 3,000 versus the VN\$5,000 it has promised) and those who are granted the loans are mostly well-to-do people who can afford to pay the loans back. The majority of the poor inhabitants dare not borrow the money for fear of being unable to pay for these loans. The total loans granted to the hamlet amounts to VN\$93,000 and over 30 persons benefitted from them.

In addition, a number of radios were sold to the inhabitants. Only the hamlet officials got these radios and the populace did not. The same thing was true with the other items, such as fabrics and milk. Only the officials got the lion's share. As a consequence, the inhabitants are very dissatisfied.

III. Security

Three out of the 5 hamlets of My An Phu village are insecure. The refugees keep coming into the two partly secure hamlets. As a consequence, the VC are exerting constant pressure on Phu Khuong Hamlet.

The most recent engagement took place when the VC attacked the Popular Force post at the edge of the hamlet for 4 hours before they were beaten back. During this action 9 Popular Force men were killed and a number of them wounded. There are now two watch towers manned day and night by a 24 man Popular Force platoon. These PF men, who are detailed to guard duty, usually fire shots to alert each other when they see strangers, like the interviewers, entering the hamlet. Curfew is enforced in the hamlet from 2000 to 0600 hours. The hamlet is supported in an emergency by province artillery.

IV. Aspirations

Living in a relatively insecure area, the hamlet residents expect the government to pay attention to their plight, and, like the people in other hamlets, they hope to receive hogs, money, etc.... to have some means for farming and animal husbandry. They are somewhat doubtful of the way the village officials are performing their duty. They complain about the misbehavior of some ARVN soldiers who, during the military operations, often steal the poultry or eat without paying for their meals. They earnestly expect the GVN to eradicate all injustice so that their life can be improved. The local people here are afraid of the hamlet chief and other subordinate officials.

In addition, they look forward to having a hamlet first-aid station well stocked with medicine and a clean maternity hospital so that the patients and women nearing childbirth can be cared for, especially during the night. This hamlet is far from the province hospital.

V. Comments

The Phu Khuong hamlet, being located in proximately of the VC dominated area, is subjected to frequent VC attacks. Many young men were killed during three VC attacks against the hamlet post. As a consequence, very few young men are left.

With the small hamlet size, the refugee problem, and the insecure situation, the residents are afraid of both the VC and the ARVN, which once placed mortar fire on the hamlet by mistake. The people's conditions are extremely miserable. The lack of active support by the GVN and the constant fear add to their misery. The interviewers were a little bit afraid to go into an isolated hamlet located on the border of the VC controlled area.

All the hamlet officials and those who are suspected by the VC - the health worker for one - dare not stay in the hamlet at night. They go elsewhere before dusk to avoid the VC.

It is the team's opinion that the district and province government have payed little attention to the wishes of the hamlet residents and officials. The inhabitants complained about the misbehaviors of the hamlet official. He, in turn, grumbled about the government letting them down.